

Meeting Notes  
Waste/Recycling Work Group #1  
October 2, 2007, 10:00  
City-County Building Rm. 656

Attendees:

- Madeleine Weil, City Policy Development
- John Homa, City Solid Waste
- John Evans, Knox County Solid Waste
- Sarah Surak, UT Facilities
- Meredith Leahy, Advanced Polymer Recycling
- Katie Swick, Knoxville Recycling Coalition

Introduction to the Energy & Sustainability Initiative

Discussion of process: The work group will develop and evaluate measures to recommend to the task force. Members will bring ideas to the table and evaluate them according to consistent criteria. A template for each evaluation will include:

- Description of the opportunity
- Program design
- Costs and benefits (consumption, \$, emissions, other)
- Implementation
- Case studies from other cities (if applicable)

Brainstorm ideas:

- Targets of 75% recycling from City facilities and 30% citywide are feasible. Currently approximately 10% recycling rate citywide (5k tons recycling, 50k tons solid waste – residential only).
- County keeps track of commercial and industrial waste, can provide data.
- Curbside recycling available through Waste Connections, but they only have a few thousand customers.
- To get to target levels, we will need to identify barriers. If recycling opportunities are available, what prevents people from taking advantage?
- Target City-County building as a pilot project for City facilities. Currently, newspaper, mixed paper and aluminum cans are collected by Sertoma. Don't know recycling rates.
- Discussion of performing waste audit in City-County building to identify amount of garbage, what portion consists of recyclables, what type of recyclables.
  - Work with custodial to collect all garbage, weigh bags, sort by commodity (weight and count).
  - Go floor by floor, may take several evenings.
  - Volunteers through Americorps.
  - Public services / UT can provide scale, safety equipment.
  - Next step – meet with PBA, custodial staff to discuss, identify location for collection, weighing and sorting.
- Other ideas for City-County building

- Reduce plastic bottles by providing water coolers and special glasses for employees.
- Provide divided recycle bins with garbage can in each office.
- Question – better to have custodial pick up recycling or have employees deliver recycling & trash to centralized locations?
- Recycling shouldn't be different and more difficult than garbage for employees to deal with, otherwise they won't make the effort.
- Carrots & sticks may be necessary. Idea – tie bonuses to departmental recycling rates.
- \$ benefits of increasing recycling rates in CCB – pay less for waste removal, get \$ for recyclable material.
- City procurement policy could require the purchase of recycled paper, other materials.
- Citywide ideas
  - Pay-as-you-throw program + automated pick up. Would require someone to do the research for Knoxville – possible to get research portion done in the next 4 years?
  - Recycling for sports tournaments and events. Now voluntary, could make this mandatory for City's participation in events.
  - Earth Flag program helps businesses establish green goals.

Next Steps:

- Waste audit of CCB. Madeleine will set up meeting with PBA, custodial services with John Homa and John Evans.
- John Homa will find safety equipment.
- John Evans will connect with Americorps volunteers.

Next Meeting: TBD after waste audit is complete.